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MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY

Facts about...

St. Louis Park Solvent Plume Site

Overview

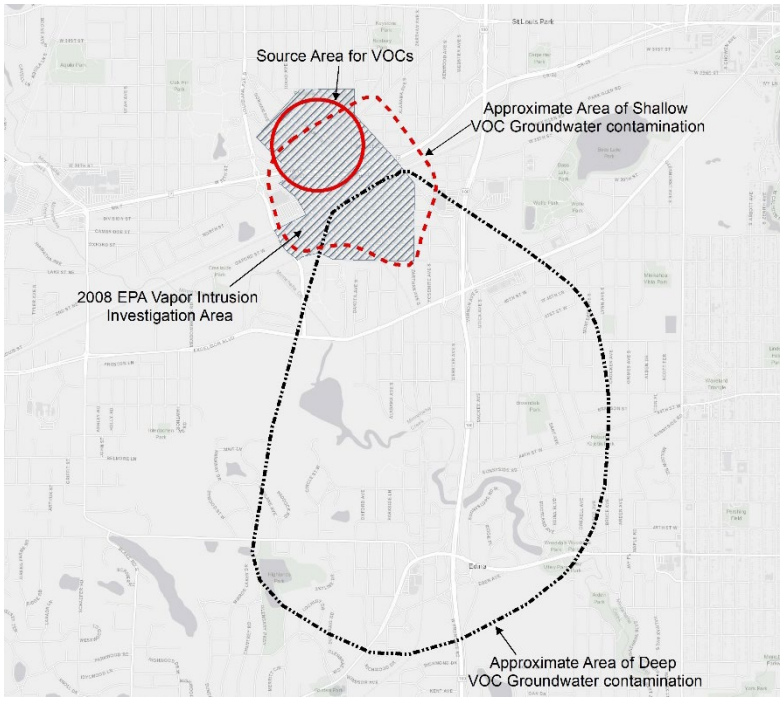
This Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) fact sheet on the St. Louis Park Solvent Plume Site will:

- **Summarize the site's historical and current investigation activities**
- **Provide information on source areas for groundwater contamination**

More information on the solvent plume (including the most recent reports) can be found on the MPCA website at http://www.pca.state.mn.us/4wy93d3

Site location

The Site is located in the cities of St. Louis Park and Edina in an area generally bounded by W. 33rd Street to the north, S. France Avenue to the east, W. 58th Street to the south and Blake Road to the west. The map on this page shows the general location of the Site. Multiple land uses are present in the Site area including recreational, vacant, residential, commercial, and industrial.



Site history

Discovery of vinyl chloride in well prompts search for Edina source of contamination

April 2004 — The city of Edina contacted the MPCA requesting assistance to find the source of vinyl chloride (VC) contamination that had been detected in two municipal wells which drew water from the Prairie du Chien-Jordan Aquifer. VC concentrations exceeded safe drinking water levels set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in only one of the wells; the city of Edina discontinued use of that well until a water treatment system, designed for removing volatile organic compounds (VOCs),

was built in 2012.

The search for a contamination source in St. Louis Park

During the investigation for the source of the chlorinated solvent release, the MPCA sampled Prairie du Chien-Jordan Aquifer wells throughout the cities of Edina, Hopkins, and St. Louis Park. The sample analytical results for these deep wells showed a pattern of increasing chlorinated solvents [PCE, TCE, cis-1,2-dichloroethylene (cis-DCE) and VC] going north from Edina into St. Louis Park, approximately 2.4 miles away.

Site history continued

November 2006 — The MPCA sampled shallow aquifer wells located in St. Louis Park. High concentrations of PCE were detected in the shallow aquifer monitoring wells and the MPCA determined that the high concentrations of PCE in groundwater could cause vapor intrusion into buildings. The MPCA focused on evaluating soil vapor in the residential and commercial neighborhoods north of Highway 7 (the Lenox and Sorenson neighborhoods) and south of Highway 7 (the Elmwood neighborhood). The data indicated that the TCE and PCE vapors in the soil were high enough to adversely affect indoor air quality in homes and businesses.

Response to vapor intrusion in St. Louis Park neighborhoods

Spring 2007 — The MPCA requested the assistance of the EPA to conduct vapor testing in the homes and commercial properties located in the Lenox, Sorenson, Elmwood and parts of the Brooklawns neighborhoods.

December 4, 2007 — The city of St. Louis Park sent a letter to approximately 270 property owners in parts of the Lenox, Sorenson, Brooklawns and Elmwood neighborhoods, informing them of the possibility of VOC vapors beneath their residences and businesses and asking them to cooperate in EPA's effort to conduct sub-slab tests inside their buildings.

December 13 and 15, 2007 — About 150 citizens attended two public meetings to learn more about the vapor intrusion study, and to sign access agreements allowing EPA to test the soil vapor beneath their buildings' basements or foundations.

July 8, 2008 — EPA, MPCA, Minn. Department of Health (MDH) and city of St. Louis Park held two open houses to update residents and businesses on response to soil vapor plume, and installation of ventilation systems.

Search for contaminant source(s) in St. Louis Park continues

2008 to 2018 — After the EPA completed the vapor intrusion assessment and mitigation action for the neighborhoods in 2008, the MPCA has continued investigation activities to identify the sources of the VOC release. Information used to identify individual source areas has included:

- Researching the ownership history for industrial properties in the area since 1955.
- Obtaining hazardous waste generator and inspection records from Hennepin County to identify the businesses that used PCE or TCE (records go back to the mid-1980s).
- Identifying where chemicals may have been stored on site and where metal degreasing activities took place by reviewing city of St. Louis Park building permit records and layout diagrams.
- Collecting soil vapor data in the area using specialized sampling techniques (passive diffusion samplers and grid spacing) to narrow down areas of highest concentration. Areas with high concentrations are likely a VOC source area.
- Confirming suspected source areas by collecting soil, groundwater, and soil vapor samples.

St. Louis Park Water Treatment Plant Design and Construction

2016 to 2018 — A health advisory letter was issued by the MDH in March 2016 due to elevated concentrations of VOCs at municipal drinking water well SLP4. To ensure drinking water remains safe:

- The city of St. Louis Park shutdown operation at the well on December 28, 2016.
- MPCA and MDH worked with the city of St. Louis Park to design a new treatment system that removes the VOCs from water at SLP4. Elevated VOCs were also detected in municipal well SLP6. A new treatment system was designed for this well, which is currently not in service.
- The city of St. Louis Park began construction of the SLP4 treatment system in 2017. Construction was complete in March 2019.

Where were chemicals released?

Places where chemicals were released (also known as source areas) include:

- Near Walker Street and Lake Street
- At Walker Street and Library Lane, and
- On Gorham Avenue between 1st Street NW and Walker Street

Businesses associated with the chemical releases no longer operate in these areas. The contamination present in the groundwater is from historical uses.

What's next?

The MPCA will continue to collect soil, groundwater, and soil vapor data at and around the VOC source areas to:

- Characterize the nature and extent of the releases;
- Bring the identified responsible parties into the investigation and clean up;
- Develop response actions to clean up the releases;

Contact Information

For more information about the Site, contact:

- Jen Jevnisek (Project Manager) at 651-757-2181, toll-free/TDD 800-657-3864 or by email at Jennifer.jevnisek@state.mn.us.
- Dave Scheer (Project Hydrogeologist) at 651-757-2693, toll-free/TDD 800-657-3864 or by email at dave.scheer@state.mn.us.